REUNION

OF THE

CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN

OF

GARRET WYCKOFF AND CORNELIA GARRETSON

GARRET WYCKOFF,

Born January 19, 1813.

CORNELIA GARRETSON WYCKOFF,

Born July 15, 1815.

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GARRET WYCKOFF AND CORNELIA GARRETSON

HELD AT

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The accompanying sketch was read at the Reunion of the Children and Grandchildren of Garret Wyckoff and Cornelia Ann Garretson, held on the 25th of March, 1904, at the home of their eldest son, Peter G. Wyckoff, A. M., Elizabeth, N. J. It is not for the public, but for private distribution only, and is designed to keep fresh before us and our children the ardent piety and unflinching courage that characterized so many of our worthy ancestors.

J. H. Wyckoff.

THE WYCKOFF FAMILY.

Read at the Wyckoff Family Reunion.

THE common ancestor of the Wyckoff family in this country was Pieter Claesen, literally Pieter the son of Claes, who came from Holland in 1636. We have not clear evidence as to who Pieter's father was, except that his name was Claes Cornelissen—Claes the son of Cornelius—and that he settled at Flatlands, L. I., soon after his arrival in the above year. The majority of the Dutch at that time used no surname. A man simply took his father's Christian name. Thus Cornelius, the son of Claes, was called Claes Cornelissen; and Pieter, the son of Claes, became Pieter Claesen. As there were several other emigrants bearing the name of Claes and Cornelius, it has been found impossible as yet to identify the original immigrant, or trace him back to the old country. We have therefore to begin with his son Pieter, who was nine years of age when he landed at New Amsterdam. This we know to be correct, as we have his own statement that he was of that age, in his oath of allegiance to the British King. Pieter's father, like nearly all the emigrants of that time, was probably a farmer. Whether he had property is not known, Pieter, however, must have been a young man of energy and thrift, for in a few years he became the wealthiest man in Flatlands, and in 1655, at the age of

28, superintended the bowery and cattle of Governor Peter Stuyvesant. The entry in the colonial record, dated July 10, 1655 reads: "Peter Claesen agreed to fodder and winter, according to custom, all the cattle which Petrus Stuyvesant has at present in his bowery at Amersfoot (the Dutch name for Flatlands); also to sow all the land that is fit for sowing, provided that he deduct from the rent the grain sown thereon. For said service the sum of 325 gr.; to leave the manure of his own and the general's in the bowery."

He was Magistrate of Flatlands for the years 1655, 1656, 1658, 1662, 1663 and in February 1664. He was likewise one of the representatives of the convention held at Midwout (now Flatbush) for the purpose of sending a delegation to Holland to lay before the States-general and West India Company the distressed state of the country. He was also one of the patentees in the town charters of 1667 and 1686. He married, about 1649, Gretie, daughter of Hendrick VanNess and on November 27, 1650, his first child, a daughter, was baptised in the old Collegiate church, New York, as that was then the only church organization, the church at Flatlands not being organized until 1654. His second child, a daughter, was also baptised in New York, Judith Bayard, wife of the Governor, being one of the witnesses. All the other children, one daughter and seven sons, in all ten, were baptised at Flatlands, of which church he was one of the charter members, and under which he is said to be buried. Unfortunately the early records of this church have been lost.

All of the ten children married into families that have entered largely into the history of the church and state of this country. We need only mention

the names—(1) The eldest, Annetje, married Roelif Martensen Schenck, and for her numerous descendants consult the Schenck genealogy. (2) Mayken (Maria), became the wife of William Williamson, and was the mother of all the New York and New Brunswick Williamsons, as the record of the Williamson Dutch branch, by James A. Williamson will show. (3) Geertie, the third daughter, married Christoffel Jansen Romeyn, a family which has given several distinguished ministers to our church. (4) Claes, the eldest son, took for his wife Sarah, daughter of Peter Montfort, and was the progenitor of the Wyckoffs who make up so much of the history of the West Branch in Pennsylvania, and also in Hunterdon County, New Jersey. (5) Cornelius married Gertrude, daughter of Simon VanArsdale, and is the ancestor of many of the Wyckoffs of Long Island not only, but of those who bear that name in New Brunswick and Middlebush, New Jersey. (6) Hendrick, having no children, adopted his nephew Johannes Williamson, on condition that he took the surname of Wyckoff, and through him became the ancestor of the Newtown Wyckoffs. (7) Garrett, married Catherine Nevius, of whom we shall speak later. (8) Martin, married Hannah Williamson. (9) Pieter, married Willemtje Schenck. (10) Jan, born Feb. 16, 1665, married Neltie, daughter of William Kouwenhoven.

Shortly after the cession of New York to the English in 1664 Pieter Claesen adopted the surname of Wyckoff. The word in Dutch is a double one—Wyk-hof. Wyk means a place of refuge, and also the ward of a city. The primary signification, was a home or dwelling-place. The word is almost identical with the Greek oikos—house, and has probably the same origin. Thus Bruynswick,

meant originally Brown's house. Hof means a court, and appears in the name Hoffman, meaning in English, courtier. Wyk-hof doubtless meant primarily household courtier, in distinction from those who were further removed from the chief court of the realm. It is to be regretted, we think, that the Dutch spelling of the name Wykhof was not retained, for the name is now spelled in English in at least six different ways: Wyckoff, Wykoff, Wicoff, Wikoff, Wickoff, and strange to say, one branch spells it Wycough. Strange, I say, and yet not so strange, for when the various branches left Long Island and separated they were still using the Dutch language. Afterwards when they began to adopt the English, they spelt the name without consultation with the other branches, and Wycough probably comes as near to the original Dutch as Wyckoff. The three branches of the family that settled in Monmouth County, New Jersey, of which our own is one, adopted the spelling Wikoff, while the Long Island and Somerset County branches, chose Wyckoff. Our father spelt the name Wikoff until about 1862, when he changed to Wyckoff, a wise change in our estimation, for there is no doubt but that the form Wyckoff will prevail, and we advice all the Wyckoffs, who are not hindered by legal limitations, to adopt that mode of spelling.

Our immediate ancestor was Garret, more correctly Gerritt, the seventh child and fourth son of Pieter Claesen. He took the oath of allegiance in 1687, and was married about 1691, to Catharine, daughter of Johannes Nevius, the common ancestor of the Nevius family in this country. His name appears on the assessment roll of Flatlands in 1693, showing him to be possessed in his own right of considerable property. In 1699, he was one of five

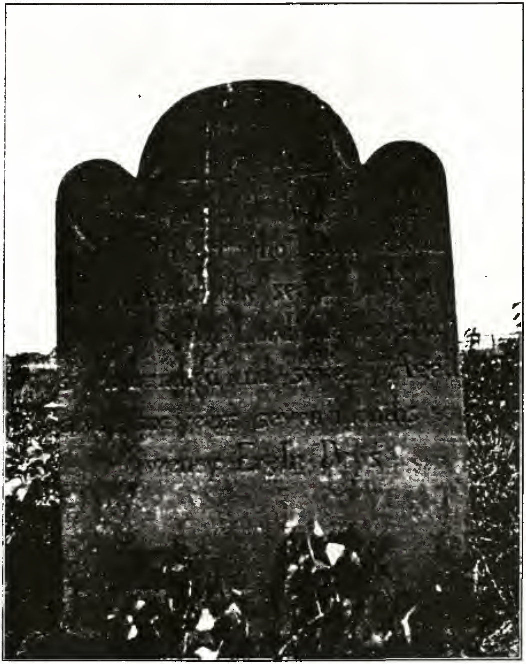
who purchased 1,000 acres of land at Marlboro, Monmouth County, and possibly intended to settle there with his brothers Peter and John, but he never left the island, having died comparatively young. His will is dated October 9, 1704, an abstract of which is as follows:—"In the name of God Amen, this 9th day of October, 1704. Be it known that I, Garret Wyckoff, of Flatlands in Kings County, on the Island of Nassau, being at present very sick and weak, I leave to my loving wife Catharine, all estate of houses and lands during her life, and 12 acres of land within the limits of Gravesend. But if she remarry then an inventory is to be made, and my eldest son Peter shall have half the houses and lands when he is of age, and the other half after my wife's decease, and he is to pay to the other children, namely Gretie, Adriane, Amke, Marytie, and Jonica £450. I give to my son Peter a silver tankard, and my plows and harrows, and all the tackling to a farm. The testator makes provision for an expected child. I make my loving friends and brothers, Claes Wyckoff, Hendrick Wyckoff, Peter Wyckoff, Garret Stoothof, and Peter Nevius, my executors, and they shall sell a 12 acre lot of land, lying at Ambrose Island located in the town of Gravesend."

The "unborn child" mentioned in the will is of particular interest to us, for it was he who became our ancestor and about whose grave we gather to-day. He was born at the end of 1704, and his father lived till he was two years old, as the will was not proved until July 12, 1707. He was named Garrett for his father, and grew up without a father to counsel him. In 1728 he married Altie Garretson, and followed his two uncles—Peter and John—to Monmouth County, New Jersey, prob-

ably occupying the land that his father had purchased in 1699. His uncle Peter had settled at Middletown, and was an elder in the Brick church of Marlboro in 1709. John, the other brother, married Nellie Cowenhoven. He sold his land at Flatlands to Cornelius Coert Van Voorhees, deed dated May 14, 1702, and emigrated to Marlboro, where he was a church officer in the early years of that church. His son William married Angenietje VanDoren, and was grand-father of Colonel William Wyckoff, whose wife was Hannah Scudder, daughter of Colonel Nathaniel Scudder and aunt of Dr. John Scudder, pioneer missionary of the Reformed church in India. Their son Nathanael Scudder Wyckoff was one of the principal landowners in Manalapan township. Another son of William Wyckoff and Angenietji VanDoren, was Peter Wyckoff, grandfather to the famous Chevalier Henry Wyckoff, once editor of the *Democratic Review*. The late Colonel Wyckoff, who fell at the head of his company at the recent battle of Santiago was a descendant of this branch.

To return to our own branch, Garret G. Wyckoff and Altie Garretson, had sons (1) Garrett, baptized October 31, 1730; (2) Samuel, baptized October 19, 1732; (3) Peter, baptized March 31, 1734.

His daughters were: *Catharine*, who married Benjamin Conover. *Idah*, who married David Conover. *Alice*, who married Jacob VanDerveer. Garret Wikoff married a second time, Aeltie Lefferts, and had one son, Auke, who was Colonel of the Third Regiment Monmouth County Militia. His will, which is dated September 1, 1765, mentions Garret as his eldest son, who in accordance with the custom of the times received his father's silver cup, and the sum of £5 in addition to the



GRAVE STONE OF GARRET G. WYCKOFF,
Born March 4, 1704, died at Marlboro, N. J., November 2, 1770.

other children's portions. To Catharine, the eldest daughter, was deeded the large Dutch Bible. The remainder of the estate was divided equally among the seven children. The signature to the will is in the Dutch form, *viz.*, *Gerrit Wijkhof*, and the will is on file in the office of the Secretary of State at Trenton, N. J.

Garret, the eldest son, remained on the homestead, and reared a large family. He was the father of Garret Wikoff, a patriot in the Revolution, and for a time a prisoner of war. He was also the great-grandfather of Rev. Benjamin DuBois Wyckoff, whose son Prof. Walter Wyckoff, is the author of the well known book—The Workers.

Peter, the third son, married Alice Longstreet, and was guide to Washington at the Battle of Monmouth. He was a Major in the army and was the great-grandfather of Dr. James H. Wikoff of Princeton, *ex*-President Cleveland's physician. Auke, the half-brother, born 1748, entered the army at an early age and in 1778 was made Lieutenant-Colonel. On June 9, 1779, he was taken prisoner. He married Sarah Schenck, and lived until 1820.

Samuel, the second son (our great-grandfather), married Gertrude Shipman, and settled near Allentown, N. J. He was one of the charter members of the Allentown Presbyterian church, and for many years a ruling elder. He had children: (1) Garret, born 1762, our grandfather; (2) Jacob, who married Alice Green; (3) Samuel, who removed to Middletown, Ohio; (4) Olive, married John Hendrickson; (5) Catharine, married William Croxon; (6) Mary, who married Thomas Sexton. Garret, the eldest son, was only 16 years of age at the time of the Battle of Monmouth, but he

took an active part in the war, and had many a thrilling incident to relate about the stirring events of that period.

He united with the church in early manhood, but I regret that the records of the Allentown church have been lost, and the precise date of his confessing Christ is not known. That he passed through a remarkable Christian experience is known from a paper that has been recently found by Mrs. J. A. Van Neste, written in our grandfather's own hand with the curious spelling that prevailed in that day. There are two entries about a year apart, the first dated Dec. 27, 1789, when he was 27 years old which reads as follows:—"In remembrance of that day on that night I do now in the presence of Almighty God write these lines, that so long as I have breath left to pray, to perform the covenant that I then made with him, that let others serve him how they would, as for me I would serve the Lord, which may the Lord evermore grant I may be enabled to perform. Amen." (Signed) Garret Wikoff.

Again on the 24th December 1790, he writes:—"On the Lord's day in the morning I do sincerely hope ever to keep it in remembrance, and may the Lord increase my desire, and give me grace to perform all my vows through Jesus Christ in whom all fullness dwells that I may find forgiveness for all my sins which may God grant may surely be performed. Amen and Amen. (Signed) Garret Wikoff. May the Lord have mercy upon me." This paper, which has been lying hidden for 114 years (only having been found a few months ago), shows that in the case of our grandfather a profession of religion was no mere form. Garret Wikoff, the author of the covenant that we have read,

married Rachel Croxen, a woman of like faith with her husband, and in 1803 the young couple with five children, Gertrude, William, Samuel, Hannah, and Peter, moved to Somerset County, and settled on the place well known to us all, that has been preserved thus far to the family through the loyalty of Mr. and. Mrs. Van Neste, and where our brother Fred. and his family now reside. Here were further born Jacob Brewer, Thomas Sexton, Maria, Rachel, and last but not least our own father, Garret, to whom was given the honored name of our branch. With the exception of our great-grandfather, whose name was Samuel, we have the name of Garret continued for seven generations. Our father was born in the old house on the Millstone river, so familiar to us, on the 19th January 1813. On his settling at Griggstown, our grandfather united by letter with the Reformed Dutch Church of Millstone and thus the family again became connected with the mother church. The church was six miles from Griggstown, but never a Sunday passed that did not find the team harnessed and that drive taken, summer and winter, rain or shine. The appearance of grandfather's team on the road was said to have been the signal for the neighbors to start for church. Grandfather united with the Millstone church in 1803. In 1804 he was chosen Deacon, and twice filled that office and three times that of Elder. All of his ten children early identified themselves with the church, and were active in the communities where they settled. Our father grew up on the banks of the Millstone, and received his education at the little red school house that still stands, and which has so long and so interesting a history. In 1831, a powerful revival took place in the old Millstone

church, one of those awakenings that stirred the community to its depths, and made a profound impression on the lives of the people. It was during this revival that our father, then 18 years of age, was brought into the church, and it will interest you to know that at the same time, Oct. 1831, our mother Cornelia Ann Garretson united with the church. Both of them often referred to that never-to-be forgotten period in their lives. After this our father was desirous of studying for the ministry, and his father encouraged him in the purpose, but the opportunity was not improved, always to his great regret, for his tastes were in the direction of a professional life. He was married to Cornelia Garretson on the 30th of December 1835, and for a time lived at Griggstown where Peter and William, Sarah an Elizabeth were born. He was a Deacon of the new church of Griggstown at the time of its organization in 1842. About 1845, he moved to Roysfield near Somerville, where we touch familiar ground. Here were born Jeremiah, Frederick, John, and Garret. All of us remember Roysfield and the old farm and neighborhood, fragrant with so many tender recollections. There we laid the foundation of the good physiques that we all possess, growing strong on wheat bread and fresh milk in summer, and buckwheat cakes and molasses in winter. At the district school under Thomas Wallace and Sarah Provost we learned the three R's. and much more besides. Happy days those on the old farm! How the scene all comes before us! The plain house with its plain furniture. The cradle that rocked us all eight. The trundle bed that held the two youngest. What a day was Christmas with its doughnuts, crullers, and mince-pies! And the quiet Sabbath. In the morning five miles

to church ; Sunday-school in the afternoon ; in the evening, singing of hymns and family prayers. They were not tiresome nor dreary days, but days of rest. No Sunday newspapers, nor rattle of trolleys and trains to disturb our meditations. But those days had to come to an end. We boys and girls were to be called into a larger world, for which the life on the farm was but a place of preparation. At the close of the fifties began the drift from the country to the city, which has been proceeding with increased volume ever since, until old scenes such as I have pictured now scarcely exist. Our father was one of the first to catch the city fever, with visions of the fortunes that might be made. So far as his own peace and comfort were concerned, the removal from the country might be said to have been the mistake of his life, for his hopes were never realized, and a succession of hard trying years followed, when poverty often stared us in the face ; but that was also a part of our education, and we are the better men and women to-day for those "wilderness years," during which we were being fitted for a life of new conditions. And here we all are, with hair whitening, surrounded by children and grand-children, a happy united family, rejoicing in the way God has led us. All, did I say? No, for one, dear Jerry, is missing—the ablest and noblest. With a life full of promise, he was taken away at the early age of 22.

I think that, without boasting, we can say that two characteristics have especially marked the Wyckoff family. (1) Loyalty to the Church. To them the Church has been the very Ark of God, a symbol of the Divine Presence and the Divine Guidance. (2) Loyalty to the State. Judge Beekman in his volume on the Early Settlers of Mon-

mouth County observes: "The Wyckoffs of Monmouth County were all sterling patriots, and some of them rendered valuable service in the Revolutionary war." Rev. Mr. Cŏbb in his address at the memorial service at the Old Tennent Church of Freehold, gave the same testimony. Let us continue true to this spirit of our worthy sires, and seek to transmit all that is noblest and best to coming generations.

A REUNION RHYME.

By Mrs. Gertrude Chandler Wyckoff.

A lay of the Wyckoffs I've ventured to write;
Not their most ancient history,—sure 'twere not right,
In this little jingle, dry annals to quote;
We deal with material not so remote.

Would that good Mother Wyckoff, dear saintly soul,
Were with us to-night. She would look at us all
With pride and affection, her sons and her daughters,
Some living at home, some over the waters,
And she scarce would remember the stress of the past,
When she toiled on the farm, and the babies came fast.

There were Peter, and William, and Sarah Maria,
And then came Elisabeth, next Jeremiah,
Frederick Schwartz, John and Garret completed the list,
And out of the eight, only one here is missed.

However she managed those obstreperous boys
With their headstrong decisions, their frolics and noise,

We can't quite imagine :—was it slipper or switch,
Or the power of affection ? Suppose you tell which !
But in trouble her refuge was higher than human ;
Her children well knew her a praying woman.

The girls were her helpers, always at her right
hand,
To cook and to clean, sew seam, gusset and band,
Or to care for the babies ; till, finally, each,
Having finished her schooling, decided to teach.

Well—you all know the sequel ; Sarah finally came
To a school in the Island—and won her VanName.
Sweet Lizzie, with cheek rounded out like a peach,
Thought 'twas her vocation to continue and teach.
Rejected the lovers, journeyed round as she wished,
Till, alack ! came a day—independence was dished !
She meekly submitted to follow her sister ;
And pupils and friends dare not tell how they
missed her.

Not so backward the boys in finding their mates ;
They are citizens, all in matrimonial states.
Peter nobly has held to his post in Bayonne,
And his name as a Principal, there he has won.
Will. was always the good boy, helpful at home,
And his halo at last—from his grey hair—has come.
Not for long was bright Jerry the clever one, spared ;
Dearly loved ones, brightest prospects, a name
unimpaired,
He was called to relinquish, when but just twenty-
two ;
Surely, such a career starts so early for few.

With a heart full of thought for the wide world
around,
With a taste for the good in biographies found,
Mother named the next boy Frederick Schwartz,
with the prayer

That the lad might, perchance, go to India, where
The need was so great ; the wish did no harm,
Though the lad has remained patron saint of the farm,
Defender of the faith of his father before him
In the same dear old place, and God's blessing is o'er him.

The two youngest lads took to halls academic,
With tastes theologic, philosophic, polemic!
All the possible laurels at home went for naught
In the choice of the one, and he sailed for Arcot.
To be sure, he returns once a decade or so,
And lectures the public, and as well, lets them know
That he and his are not dead of starvation—
Gives for proof of the fact, ocular demonstration.
Not far behind him in avoirdupois
Is the other young preacher, the youngest boy,
Who travels, and preaches, and travels again,
And when weary of preaching, takes up work with his pen.
He's a great correspondent, but uses post-cards,
For the length of his letters goes by inches, not yards.

Now we've said not a word of each man's better half :
We will let the men say it ; for though you may laugh,
We know we are modest—we hide blushing faces !
And yet we are faithful, and stick to our places.
But we're proud of our families, proud of their looks,
Proud of the way they can take to their books,
Proud of the industry they show as workers,
Proud that among them we need count no shirkers ;
Glad for the girls when their hearts cease to roam

And for some worthy man they make a true home
Glad for each lad when he finds a good wife,
But more glad than all for the best part of life—
God's love in the heart, God's care over all,
Unmerited favor, His ear when we call,
Making each one content in his own little niche,
With the blessing of God which alone maketh rich.

GENEALOGICAL RECORD.

1. Pieter Claesen Wyckoff. Emigrated from Holland in 1636 at the age of 9 years. Married Gretie, daughter of Hendrick VanNess. Lived and died at Flatlands, L. I.

2. Gerrit Pietersen, fourth son of the above, born about 1666, died 1707. Married Catharine Nevius.

3. Garret G. Wyckoff, youngest son of Garret P., born Mar. 4, 1704, died at Marlboro, N. J., Nov. 2, 1770. Married 1st, Aeltie Garretson; 2nd, Aeltie Lefferts.

4. Samuel Wyckoff, second son of Garret, born Oct. 19, 1732, died at Allentown, N. J. Married Gertrude Shipman.

5. Garret S. Wyckoff, born 1762. Married Rachel Croxen. Moved from Allentown to Griggstown, N. J., in 1803. Died 1838. Interred at Millstone N. J.

6. Garret Wyckoff, youngest child of above, born Jan. 13, 1813. Married Cornelia Ann Garretson, born July 15, 1815.

Children of Garret Wyckoff and Cornelia Ann Garretson.

(1) Peter Garretson, born May 17, 1837. Married 1st, Christianna Staats; 2nd, Elizabeth Sandford

VanZandt. Occupation, Teacher. Since 1889, Principal, Public School, No. 5, Bayonne, N. J. Master of Arts, Rutgers' College, 1886. (2) William Brewer, Merchant, Born July 15, 1839. Married 1865, Lizzie Serviss. Occupation, Merchant. Residence, 176, Summer Ave., Newark, N. J. (3) Sarah Maria, born August 21, 1841. Teacher for 11 years. Married 1869, David M. VanName. Address: Port Richmond, N. Y. (4) Elizabeth, born August 26, 1843. Teacher for 24 years. Married 1885, George W. VanName. Address: Port Richmond, S. I., N.Y. (5) Jeremiah Lord, born April 10, 1847. Married Dec. 7, 1867, Sarah Young. Merchant. Died Nov. 18, 1869. Buried in Oddfellows Cemetery, Philadelphia, Penn. (6) Frederick Swartz, born Feb. 28, 1849. Married Ella Clayton. Farmer, Griggstown, N. J. Resides on the old homestead. (7) John Henry, born September 28, 1851. Graduated, Rutgers' College, 1871; New Brunswick Theological Seminary, 1874. Missionary of the Reformed Church. Address: Vellore, Madras Presidency, India. (8) Garret, born August 21, 1855. Graduated, Rutgers' College, 1881; Theological Seminary, 1884. Pastor, Reformed Church, Holmdel, N.J.

M. E. PRESS, MOUNT ROAD, MADRAS.